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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR MAY 03, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for May 03, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / EKSPRES / BOLGE / ZAMAN: As the AKP Adana May 6 party congress drew near Abdullah Dogru, Chairperson of AKP Adana party organization, voiced allegations that his political rivals had been wiretapping his telephone conversations. Dogru claimed that Seyhan Mayor Azim Ozturk had been striving to name an opponent that would stand against him during the May 6 chairmanship contest. Bolge name implies that Ozturk has been backing a name called Omer Kaya and hints that Kaya's candidacy would not be appropriate. Ekspres daily notes that AKP Adana party grassroots have been supporting Dogru whereas AKP national headquarters have been backing Omer Kaya, who still has not announced his candidacy. Meanwhile, Mustafa Kebude, a candidate who would run for chairmanship has been paying visits to AKP delegates in the districts. Meanwhile, Zaman daily quoted Adana Mayor as announcing that he was supporting nobody in the congress of the AKP.

SABAH: PM Erdogan said that in a speech he delivered to party members that provincial and district chairpersons of AKP were being threatened by the PKK terrorists.

HURRIYET: Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir has been invited to the AKP party congress that would be held in Diyarbakir on Sunday (05/07). PM Erdogan will be participating in the congress.

YENI SAFAK / OZGUR GUNDEM: Upon invitation from Human Rights Association's Diyarbakir Chapter, European Parliament's EU-Turkey Joint-Parliamentary Commission Chairperson Joost Lagendijk will come to Diyarbakir on May 6.

ZAMAN / EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Ministry of Interior sent a secret circular to the Governor's Offices in Turkey and

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allegedly required establishment of committees that would work: 1-to detect students who are being abused by the terrorist organization, 2- to prevent the Kurdish language be medium of teaching and instruction, 3-to encourage students to attend Turkish language and Turkish culture classes.

ZAMAN / HURRIYET / EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM / SABAH / YENI SAFAK: Van 3rd Heavy Penalty Court's jurors heard statements of 45 witnesses, including bombed bookstore owner Seferi Yilmaz, in an open-air court hearing at the place where November 9 Semdinli incident took place last year in Semdinli. Hurriyet daily noted

that 37 of 40 witnesses were present at the hearing. The court delegation also made studies at the location of the incident. 12 attorneys from bar associations of Van, Hakkari and Ankara made an application to watch the hearing. Intense security measures have been taken and press members were not allowed to take photos.

EVRENSEL: The daily cites Arbil Mayor in Iraq as expressing his hopes for living in a peaceful and friendly environment and opposing Turkey's preparations for military operations at the border.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily reported military activities as going on in the Cudi Mountain in Sirnak. Turkish forces have reportedly been deployed in a strategic area in the Iraqi side of the mountain which has reportedly been used a lot by terrorists to infiltrate into Turkey.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Three former administrators of Kurd-Der (Kurdish Association), which has been recently closed, attempted to walk towards the border in Silopi district, and were eventually detained by soldiers on grounds that Kurd-Der members wore uniforms with statements in Turkish and Kurdish as saying "The cost of enforcing the people to migrate is big. The target is depicted as the PKK, but the actual targets are Kurds and Kurdistan."

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Police found 60 kilograms of heroin in the fuel tank of a truck in Gaziantep. Six people have been detained in connection with the event.

EKSPRES / BOLGE / SABAH (GUNEY): Adana's 7th Court of First Instance has continued to hear the case of Ceyhan Mayor Huseyin Sozlu (from MHP) against whom PM Erdogan filed a complaint because of a January 6-dated interview of Sozlu with a local Adana newspaper. Sozlu allegedly depicted PM Erdogan as a traitor during a speech he made at the January 6 ceremonies marking the Ceyhan district's liberation from enemy forces, and

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Sozlu faces a penalty of paying 20,000 new Turkish liras to Erdogan if convicted.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The May Day demonstrations turned into a protest against the U.S. in Hatay's Iskenderun district. Hundreds of people reportedly marched against alleged U.S. interest in the Iskenderun Bay. Tension developed during demonstrations in Mersin when reportedly a TAYAD-member group opened a banner with pictures of 122 people who allegedly died during hunger strikes in Turkey. Police intervened with gas bombs. People carried banners of hunger strikers in Adana as well. CHP deputies attended May Day in Adana. Reportedly, ultra-nationalists and police intervened in the march of May Day demonstrators in Elazig. 15 demonstrators have been detained. Organizing Committee decided to cancel the rally because of security concerns in the rally area (This summary is from 05/03 edition).

EVRENSEL: The following figures have been reported as people attending May Day celebrations in several provinces in the southeast: Malatya (3000), Adiyaman (over 1000), Gaziantep (2000), Bingol (100). The daily reported other May Day activities in Mus's Varto and Bulanik districts, Bitlis, Kars, Hatay and Adana as well.

HURRIYET / ZAMAN / SABAH: President Ahmet Necdet Sezer signed a decree that would assign new security directors to 26 provinces and that would reshuffle directors in 11 provinces. Hakkari Security Director, who has been accused of acting insufficiently during the demonstrations following November 9 Semdinli case, have been moved to Kirsehir. Former Deputy Director of Intelligence Office of the National Security Directorate has been named as the new Hakkari Security Director.

HURRIYET: Interior Minister criticized ANAP leader Erkan Mumcu

for using the term "guerilla" instead of "terrorist" when making reference to PKK terrorists.

OZGUR GUNDEM: TKP (Turkish Communist Party) building in Diyarbakir has been set on fire yesterday morning by unidentified people. Material damage has been reported.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir dismissed allegations of a Hurriyet columnist in a March 31-dated article claiming that Baydemir met with PKK leader Murat Karayilan.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Batman Mayor Huseyin Kalkan met with 32 headmen in the province to exchange ideas and perform a needs assessment for future undertakings of the municipality.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Attorney of Abdullah Ocalan, who went to Diyarbakir to meet with one of his clients in a Diyarbakir jail, has been briefly detained.

SABAH (GUNEY): Batman Governor Haluk Imga said that 22 young PKK members have been convinced to return to normal life with the cooperation of the state and the families.

SABAH (GUNEY): 1000 tons of petroleum has leaked on the ground in Batman due to the some sections of pipeline that decayed. TPAO Petroleum Corporation started renovating the decayed parts, but great damage was done to cultivated areas due to the leakage.  
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